

NCHRP 15-33 FY 2006  
AASHTO Guide for Transportation Landscape and Environmental Design  
**CREATING COMPLETE CORRIDORS**  
Landscape Sensibilities in Transportation Projects

Second Draft Review  
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June 13, 2008

**General comments**

The second draft of the guide is a noteworthy success. When finalized this guide will offer an excellent opportunity for fully integrating transportation as part of the environment.

It is recommended that a detailed spell and grammar check be done for the whole document. Those that were found will be itemized in the specific comments below.

**Specific comments**

**Page 4:** the last paragraph discusses context as both the current setting of a place but is must also consider the future. This needs to be expanded in the past should also be considered. Transportation needs to consider the cumulative effects on the environment. We also need to consider if a transportation project can ameliorate past damage incurred by the original construction. Good examples of this are the interstate system through coastal areas and also through city cores that were once viable neighborhoods.

**Chapter 2:** Recommend enlarging the typical section graphics. I was viewing in black and white but they are not readable.

**Page 12:** Last sentence in the first bullet reads “Environmental design quality has become increasingly important to communities in these areas.” This is very true but it should be noted that this is not limited to this setting and is becoming wide spread in urban, suburban, exurban, etc.

**Page 13:** The first paragraph discussing Rural Corridors mentions recreational bicycle use can be common in scenic or other areas easily reached. Not sure if this is the place for the discussion but “national” bicycle routes need to be discussed. They are on the increase and should be considered part of “context”. Also, most if not all states have state wide bicycle plans.

**Page 18:** Just a notation, that safety needs to consider not only “motoring” public, but pedestrians and cyclists. The guide noted this in both the discussion on access and mobility but it should be stressed here too.

**Page 44:** Please define “Michigan Left” and North Carolina “Super Street”.

**Page 47:** Last paragraph, please complete sentence, it now reads “The standard for crash testing of guardrails is NCHRP Report.”

**Page 48:** Recommend considering lighting in the context of mitigation – a good example is the use of amber shielded lights in coastal areas for sea turtles.

**Page 49:** Additional notation regarding lighting is that the color of fixtures could be an issue.

**Page 50:** In paragraph beginning with “For all categories...”, omit block after blocking.

**Page 62:** First full paragraph – discourages should be discouraged. Also specific mention should be made for discouraging birds – mortality rates are increasing rapidly due to specific uses of vegetation and habitat created for small wildlife.

**Page 62:** In discussing the location of Utilities, utilities are given the more important role. The opposite needs to be considered particularly in historic areas and in wetland/stream environs.

**Page 64:** Second full paragraph says vegetation can provide noticeable noise reduction. This is not true! Vegetation has to be very dense (at least 100 feet deep and densely spaced evergreen) to be remotely effective. Please eliminate the photo used as the type of trees in the photo would not do anything to alleviate noise.

**Page 71:** Need to add some emphasis of vegetation reclamation and pictures of what “not to do” in clearing. Also, emphasis on public outreach and communication of when maintenance activities will occur in an area needs to be added.

**Page 75:** Next to last paragraph again discusses noise reduction from vegetation – density is at least 100 feet deep of evergreens only.

**Page 76:** First paragraph mentions a typical four foot high noise wall – this is not typical. A typical wall is more like 12 feet high. Also, having an even panel height is nice for appearance but square footage is an important element in the cost criteria for determining if a barrier is feasible. The additional cost could push a wall cost up to being “not feasible”.

**Page 77:** Fifth paragraph mentions retrofits to fences. Need to include higher fences – We have installed nine foot fences in areas where deer crossings have been an issue for the Interstate.

**Page 84:** Would like to see more discussion and/or pictures in paragraph mentioning routing runoff.

**Page 86:** Under Design Phase NEPA is the National Environmental Policy Act not Protection.

**Page 91:** Under Functional Interface, please complete sentence that begins “Appropriate access management...”

**Pages 96, 98 and 99:** Several typos on these pages.

**Page 103:** Under Outside the Right-of-way, first bullet, identify should by identity.

**Page 105:** Under Roadside Structures, last bullet Utilities – this is incomplete.

**Page 109:** Several typos

**Page 113:** Might want to check with Maryland DOT – they have some great photos of detention ponds that have really good landscape design.

**Page 114:** Blank page – need discussion of Suburban Expressway Corridors.

**Page 123:** What was the issue in Rhode Island that led to a 20 year delay?

**Page 124:** Under Roadway, last bullet states any transit service on thisd road type would likely be intercity bus service. As this guide will take us into the future, suggest that this is not necessarily the only type service. There are several high-speed rail /mag-lev corridors in several states that could parallel/share interstate/freeway right-of-way. Also, commuter rail lines are on the increase.

**Remote Corridors:** There is no discussion in any of the remote type corridors about “wildlife crossings” or corridors. There should be as this is the most likely candidates to have issues.